What is claimed is:

Subt B7

1. An oligonucleotide 8 to 30 nucleotides in length which is targeted to a nucleic acid encoding human ras and which is capable of inhibiting ras expression.

2. The oligonucleotide of claim 1 which is targeted to mRNA encoding human H-ras.

3. The oligonucleotide of claim 1 which is targeted to mRNA encoding human Ki-ras.

4. The oligonucleotide of claim 1 which is targeted to mRNA encoding human N-ras.

5. The oligonucleotide of claim 4 which is targeted to a 5' untranslated region, translation initiation site, coding region or 3' untranslated region of an mRNA encoding human N-ras.

6. The oligonucleotide of claim 4 which has SEQ ID NO: 44, 45, 46, 47, 49 or 52.

7. The oligonucleotide of claim 1 which comprises at least one backbone modification.

8. The oligonucleotide of claim 1 wherein at least one of the nucleotide units of the oligonucleotide is modified at the 2' position of the sugar.

9. The oligonucleotide of claim 1 which is a chimeric oligonucleotide.

10. The oligonucleotide of claim 1 in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Subt B2

11. A method of modulating the expression of human ras comprising contacting tissues or cells containing a human ras gene with an effective amount of an oligonucleotide of claim 1, whereby expression of ras is modulated.

12. A method of inhibiting the proliferation of cancer cells comprising contacting cancer cells with an effective amount of an oligonucleotide of claim 1, whereby proliferation of the cancer cells is inhibited.

Subt B3

13. A method of preventing or treating a condition arising from the activation of a ras oncogene comprising contacting an animal suspected of having a condition arising from the activation of a ras oncogene with an effective amount of an oligonucleotide of claim 1, whereby said condition is prevented or treated.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said activation of a ras oncogene is abnormal expression of a ras oncogene.

15. The method of claim 13 wherein said condition is a hyperproliferative condition.

16. The method of claim 13 wherein the condition is cancer.

17. The method of claim 13 wherein the condition is colorectal cancer, melanoma, liposarcoma, mesothelioma, sarcoma, colon cancer, or pancreatic cancer.

18. The method of claim 11 wherein the cells are cancer cells.

19. The method of claim 11 wherein the cells are blood cells.

20. The method of claim 11 wherein the cells are peripheral blood mononuclear cells.

21. A method of reducing expression of a preselected mRNA target in blood cells of a subject, comprising administering to said subject an oligonucleotide targeted to said preselected mRNA in an amount sufficient to reduce expression of said mRNA target.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein the blood cells are peripheral blood mononuclear cells.

23. The method of claim 21 wherein said preselected mRNA target is H-ras.